

OZARKS TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

MIDDLE COLLEGE

A Partnership with Springfield Public Schools

Frequently Asked Questions & Answers

What is MIDDLE COLLEGE?

Middle College is a high school on a college campus which provides the opportunity to earn a high school diploma while taking classes on the campus. Here students explore individual career paths and earn both high school and college credits while potentially earning an associate degree, certificate, or other transferable college credits.

Why is there a need for MIDDLE COLLEGE?

The traditional high school setting is not an effective model for all students to achieve a high school diploma. High school educational reform initiatives are necessary to reach targeted students who are capable of academic success but may not perform well for a wide variety of reasons and life circumstances. Providing ways to support underperforming, underrepresented populations to increase the rate of persistence to graduation is a key priority for Springfield Public Schools, Ozarks Technical Community College, and the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

What is the mission statement?

To provide a contemporary, academic pathway for Springfield Public Schools students to earn a high school diploma and college credits while developing career and technical skills to facilitate a seamless transition to the workforce or post-secondary education.

How is the MIDDLE COLLEGE different from traditional high school?

Classes are small with each student developing a specialized academic plan of graduation with his/her teacher advisor. Students participate in learning specific career and technical skills that may be applied towards a degree, certificate, or transferable college credits. Students complete internships that are matched to their individual career pathway.

What are the major goals of the MIDDLE COLLEGE?

1. To serve underperforming, underrepresented students that are at risk of not graduating
2. To develop competencies in specific occupations
3. To provide a supportive transition from high school to college
4. To provide a new, contemporary academic pathway for students outside of the traditional high school setting
5. To develop an individualized achievement plan to earn a high school diploma
6. To earn high school credit towards a certificate, degree, or transferable credit
7. To participate in experiential learning through paid and/or unpaid internships in a specific career pathway
8. To develop a lifework plan that fits with the individual students needs and career goals

What are the specific benefits to the student?

1. Small college-style classes
2. Non-traditional, performance-based core classes

3. Opportunity to earn high school diploma through a new academic pathway in a contemporary college setting
4. Personal teacher/mentor to assist each student
5. Individualized Academic Plan (IAP)
6. Use of personal laptops
7. Free college textbooks and use of career tools/supplies in college laboratory setting
8. Free college tuition for technical education
9. Non-traditional school schedule hours
10. Paid and/or unpaid internships
11. Available daycare for students with children

When will the MIDDLE COLLEGE open?

In August 2008 with a school calendar and daily schedule that is specific to the needs of the Middle College.

Where will the MIDDLE COLLEGE be located?

The Middle College will be located on the Ozarks Technical Community College campus.

How many students can enroll?

We will accept 32 students for the 2008-2009 school year.

Who is eligible to attend?

Students from all six SPS high schools including Parkview, Kickapoo, Glendale, Central, Hillcrest and Bailey Alternative High School.

What type of student is a good candidate for the MIDDLE COLLEGE program?

- ◆ Current sophomores may apply. Students must qualify as a rising junior or in that cohort group by age or reclassification as part of the graduation class of 2010
- ◆ Must reside in the SPS R-12 school district attendance zone
- ◆ A student that is underperforming in the traditional high school setting
- ◆ A student that has the desire and motivation to complete high school through a college campus, adult-oriented environment
- ◆ A student that is willing to leave their home school to attend Middle College on the Ozarks Technical Community College campus for their junior and senior years

What student does not qualify?

Middle college does not serve students who are doing well academically in high school and want to make an early transition to college. Honor level classes, advanced placement courses, dual credit, and dual enrollment are other options to serve these students. Middle college is exclusively for students who have not experienced success in a traditional high school and there is a high risk of not graduating. Most candidates have a history of underperformance, but their potential is great if provided a different academic option to complete high school. The middle college concept provides laboratory classes that require the ability to follow directions, stay focused, and have good attendance to complete the coursework and technical skills training. Significant discipline issues and poor attendance is not an option if selected to participate in the middle college.

What specific criteria on each student may be collected to determine potential qualification and *fit* for this program?

Application, attendance, age, transcript credits, discipline records, GPA, reclassification, SRI reading scores (minimum 8th grade reading level), PLAN scores, Ozarks Technical Community College administered

assessment, counselor recommendation, student essay, student self-advocacy, current school attendance or drop out, student/parent interview, as well as any significant circumstance or anecdotal information.

What type of instructional program will be offered? What courses will be offered?

- ◆ High school required courses
- ◆ Performance-based learning through PLATO
- ◆ College courses for high school and college credit
- ◆ Career and technical training (Two Options in 2008-2009: Early Childhood Development OR Diesel/Automotive)
- ◆ Paid and/or unpaid internship experiences

What is PLATO?

A performance-based curriculum designed to meet the instructional needs of students to fulfill their high school graduation requirements. PLATO is a web-based computer program that is customized to the individual student.

What are the school hours?

School schedules vary by the days, semester, and cohort group.

Do I attend my home school as well?

No, once you are selected, the Middle College is your new home school. You will spend your junior and senior year on the campus at the Middle College program at Ozarks Technical Community College.

What about summer school?

The Middle College regular classroom time is closed in the summer. We encourage students to attend summer school through Springfield Public Schools to earn additional needed high school credits or continue working at internship jobsites. The academic teacher/advisor will provide some services and follow up during the summer months.

What organizations are partnered with the MIDDLE COLLEGE model at Ozarks Technical Community College?

Springfield Public Schools R-12

Springfield Chamber of Commerce

Area Springfield Employers

Business, Civic, Faith, Higher Education and the Community at Large

How can a student get into the program?

Students should see their school counselor for initial referral. All students must meet the basic eligibility requirements, live in the SPS district's attendance zone, complete the application process, and be selected to participate.

How do I apply?

Students must be referred by their high school counselor and complete the middle college application process by December 7, 2007. Late applications will be accepted through January 31, 2008.

What is the selection process?

1. **Phase I**—Students will be referred by high school counselors.

2. Identified students (and interested others) will be invited to a two hour orientation/assessment meeting with staff members from the Ozarks Technical Community College and Springfield Public Schools at their home school. Parent permission is required to attend.
3. Interested students will complete an application and submit it to their school counselor.
4. **Phase II**—60 students will be invited to continue in the application process, a required one half day assessment will be conducted with each student on the Ozarks Technical Community College campus. The following day, student and parent/guardian interviews will be held, results of the assessment will be shared, tours of campus provided, and the final application process is completed.
5. A legally independent student is encouraged to bring a parent; however, an advocate may serve in their place.
6. **Phase III**—Ozarks Technical Community College in cooperation with Springfield Public Schools will determine the final selections for candidates for the middle college enrollment.
7. Other eligible applicants will go on a waiting list for future openings.
8. A few students may be accepted beginning second semester if openings are available.

Will students receive a Missouri accredited high school diploma?

Yes, students will receive a Springfield Public School’s diploma.

How much does it cost?

If selected to attend, students’ tuition and books will be paid for by both institutions, Springfield Public Schools and Ozarks Technical Community College. The student will potentially earn 16-20 hours of free college credit over a two year period.

Will transportation be provided?

No, students must provide their own transportation.

What happens if I change my mind and I do not want to continue the Middle College program?

You are obligated through a contract to complete each semester you start because Springfield Public Schools has paid your tuition to attend the Middle College program. If at the semester’s end a student chooses not to return, he/she may return to their home school to complete high school credits without penalty and a new student may take your place.

Can I still qualify for the A+ incentive offered at my home school?

No, A + eligibility is not an option if you attend Middle College.

Can I attend MIDDLE COLLEGE if I don’t live in Springfield Public Schools district?

No, at this time the program is only for Springfield Public School students.

Who can I contact if I have additional questions about the MIDDLE COLLEGE?

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***Want to apply?** Contact your high school counselor for an application packet.